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Flashback



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FLASHBACK

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society
Preserving the Past for the Future

Volume 61

Spring 2011

Number 1

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On the cover: The pumping station at left and resident building, both built of stone, are two of the early structures built along the West Fork of the White River to supply water to the city of Fayetteville.

Photo by Charlie Alison, February 2011

Fayetteville's Water System on the West Fork of the White River

By Steve Erwin

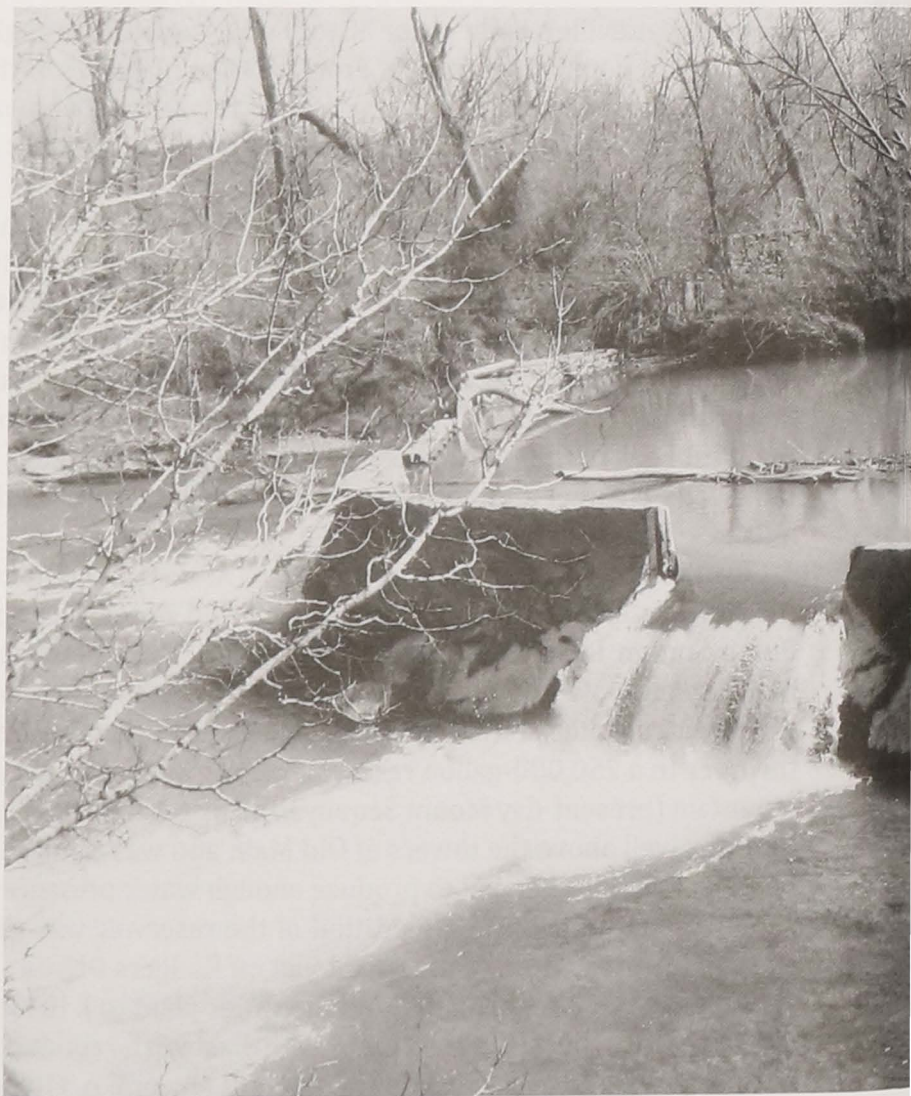
Fayetteville's early water history was shaped by drought and population growth. From 1894 to about 1966 the water system on the West Fork of the White River was the main source or backup water supply. Today, relics of the system can be seen in southeast Fayetteville.

The population of Fayetteville was 2,942 in 1890. At that time, residents obtained their water from wells and springs. Influential citizens sought to improve the situation and employed an engineer from Chicago to report on the prospects of a municipal water supply. The unknown engineer reported that a sufficient supply for a population of 25,000 could be obtained from the West Fork of the White River by building low head dams in the river's channel and constructing storage reservoirs in the hills.¹

Brothers William B. Rees and Charles A. Rees constructed the first water plant in 1894 at the east end of what is now Pump Station Road in southeast Fayetteville. The water plant had a steam-powered pump capable of delivering 200 gallons of untreated water per minute through a six-inch pipeline from the river to a 750,000-gallon reservoir on the west edge of East Mountain (present-day Mount Sequoyah). The reservoir's elevation was well above the towers of Old Main and was thought to be as high as ever needed to produce enough water pressure to supply the city's needs. The location of the reservoir was very close to the present-day water plant just off Rodgers Drive.²

In 1903, the Rees brothers sold the water plant to J. H. McIlroy, C.D. McIlroy, E.B. Harrison, and Paul H. Easby, who conducted business as the Fayetteville Water Company. Mayor C.A. Mulholland signed Ordinance No. 197 on September 29, 1906, creating the Fayetteville Water Improvement District No. 1, which en-

abled the city of Fayetteville to own and operate its own water system.³ The next year the city bought the water plant from the Fayetteville Water Company for \$90,000. The plant consisted of the pump station; the reservoir site; the roadway to the station;



The West Fork of the White River pours through an unfettered gate built into

the right-of-way across private property for two and a half miles of pipe line; water rights on the river; the stone pumping station building; two frame residences; a barn and coal shed; two 80-horsepower tubular boilers; 1 million gallon and a 500,000



Photo by Steve Erwin

Dam No. 1, constructed in 1907 to provide drinking water to Fayetteville.

gallon per day capacity pumps; two smaller pumps; the necessary suction pipes, steam pipes, waste pipes, exhaust pipes, valves and other hardware at the pump station; a 750,000 gallon masonry reservoir, and personal property worth approximately \$2,000.⁴

A dam, Dam No. 1, was built at the pump station in November 1907, replacing a previously built wooden dam that required excessive maintenance. The Water Plant superintendent, Lee Duggans, and a force of 16 men performed the work. The dam was built in the shape of a "V" pointing downstream and was 135 linear feet from end to end. Its base was eight feet wide while the top was two feet. The structure was five feet high on the wings and four feet high in the middle where a gate, to be opened during high water, was constructed. It was built entirely of concrete and stone, costing about \$1,000. The base of the dam was anchored to the top of the Hindsville limestone geological unit at its contact with the Fayetteville shale. The dam resulted in water being backed a full mile up the river and seemingly represented a dependable water source for years to come.⁵

A drought in 1909 completely dried up the West Fork at the pump station for three months. Fayetteville residents went back to getting their water from wells and springs. The University of Arkansas handled the situation by connecting its water system to the spring that is today located in the city parking lot adjacent to the Walton Arts Center.⁶

To enable the city of Fayetteville to have a backup system in case of drought, Ordinance No. 270 was passed in 1909, which authorized an auxiliary pump station on Clear Creek near Johnson, Ark. A 400-gallon-per-hour steam pump was moved from the West Fork pump station to Clear Creek. An eight-inch line from Clear Creek was connected to the distribution system feeding raw, unfiltered water into the network.⁷

Water from the West fork was preferred because the drainage area was mostly sandstone, shale and some thin limestone rock units, which produced soft water that was more desirable to drink and easier to purify than Clear Creek water, which is

underlain by limestone and is hard. Even though the soft water of the West Fork was preferred to hard water of Clear Creek, the West Fork system was found to be reliable only from November to the middle of July. Water from Clear Creek had to supplement the West Fork water during the rest of the year.⁸

By 1916, Fayetteville's population had grown to 6,000. To meet the increased demand for water, a 16-inch line was installed from the pump station to the reservoir on East Mountain.

To allow more water to be stored in the system and to be better prepared for the drought and further increases in population, the pump station dam was raised three feet in 1923 and Dam No. 2 was constructed about one mile above the pump station.⁹ A new \$30,000 Fairfield-Morse oil-powered pump capable of delivering 800 gallons per minute was installed at the pump station in 1923. The old steam-powered pump was abandoned.¹⁰

Still, more water was needed. Dam No. 3 was started in June 1925 in an attempt to make the system along the West Fork of the White River independent of the Clear Creek system. J.H. McIlroy, chairman of the sewer and water commission, reported:

The new dam will be three and a half to four feet high and seventy-five feet across. It is located two miles up the river from the pump station and probably will be completed within two week's time, weather permitting. Location is considered exceptionally good as the land on both sides for about three-quarters of a mile are from six to eight feet above the present water line and this will enable construction that will not cause overflow of adjoining farmland. The present water supply is holding in spite of the long period without rainfall and while the flood gates of the old dam are up now, the river is still running.¹¹

In order to provide additional emergency water, Dam No. 4 was approved by the Water Board at the suggestion of city engineer Emmett M. Ratliff. Construction was scheduled to begin

in September/October 1927 when the water level was low. The dam was to be about a mile upstream from Dam No. 3 and was estimated to impound 30 million gallons of water giving the city and available water supply of 150 million gallons.¹² The dam

Democrat

APRIL 10, 1928.

**Families Lose
In Recent Storm:
Damage, \$150,000**

Conservative estimates of storm damage in the immediate Northwest Arkansas section were today placed by American Red Cross surveyors at approximately \$140,000 or \$150,000. This more than \$40,000 was to homes, about 60 in number, and 1000 or more to grounds, outbuildings and orchards.

Help Needed; Headquarters Opened
A fund of not less than \$12,000 is needed to rehabilitate the 60 families directly hit with the Red Cross, the disaster relief secretary, J. L. Mitchell, and the field worker, Miss Scharlottie Stewart, visited at their demolished place of residence.

**City Water Supply
To Be 150,000,000
Gals.; New Dam**

A fourth dam at White River, source of Fayetteville water supply, is being constructed by the water board of managers under direction of the city engineer, Emmett Ratliff, with Lehman holding contract for labor. The new dam will give the city an available water supply of 150,000,000 gallons, or an additional 30,000,000 gallons above the impounding capacity of the three old dams, Mr. Ratliff said. The water board is buying its own construction material for the dam, which is 160x5x10 feet in size.

Here, Scorekeeper!
28th Feb 1928

Reprint courtesy of the Northwest Arkansas Times

The front page of the April 30, 1928, edition of the Fayetteville Daily Democrat announces the plan to construct a fourth dam on the West Fork of the White River.

was to be 160 feet long, 5 feet high and 10 feet wide. The 10-foot width was in contrast to the other dams, which were 2 to 3 feet wide. The dam's greater width was possibly for secondary use as a bridge. Ratliff directed the construction and Lehman Brothers had the contract for the labor. The Water Board bought its own construction material.¹³

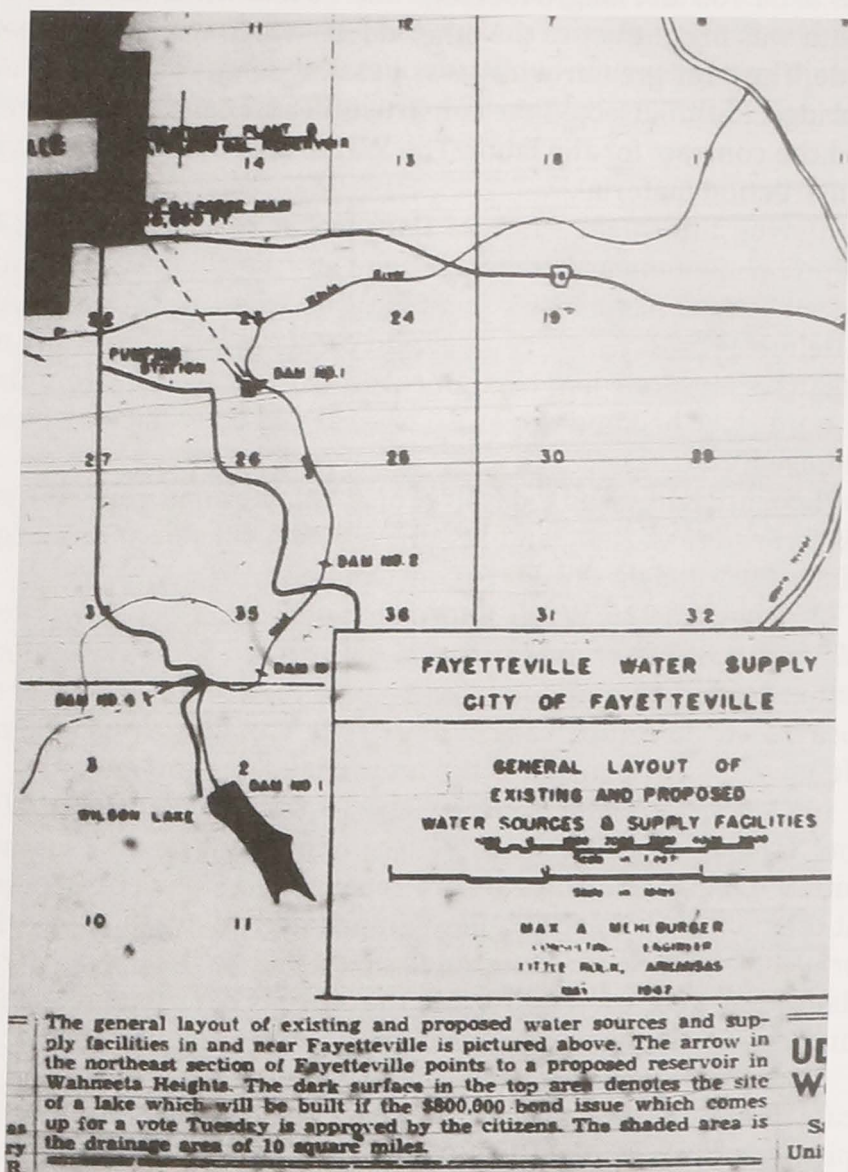
During the construction of Dam No. 4 in November 1927, Ralph Lehman unearthed a wolf bone at a depth of 17 feet during construction of a coffer-dam. The bone identified by Samuel C. Dellinger, professor of zoology and curator of the University of Arkansas Museum, had been uncovered about 50 feet from the present river bed and under a 125-year-old tree that had been removed.¹⁴

Leonard Kelly, who today lives on City Lake Road, reports that his father Frank Kelly and his uncles, John Gibson and George Gibson, worked on the dam's construction.

In August 1926, Water Improvement District No. 1 awarded W.C. and L.B. Fallin, and J.C. and Myrtle Martin \$250 in compensation for damage and future damage to their lands, which were located at the future Lake Wilson Dam site and along Wilson Hollow downstream below the future dam for the lake.¹⁵

In July 1927, Water Improvement District No. 1 awarded W.C. and Sarah Frances Dotson \$250 in compensation for damage and future damage to a tract of land containing 187.5 acres located at the mouth of Wilson Hollow Branch and upstream along the branch. Damage was expected to be caused by the use of water dams that were used to provide the citizens of Fayetteville with drinking water.¹⁶

These two awards, noted in the county deeds seem to indicate that the construction of a dam on Wilson Hollow was in the planning stage. In March 1930, the Fayetteville City Council approved the construction of what was to become Lake Wilson, which would supply an additional 250 million gallons of water in times of emergency. This move was prompted by low water during the fall of 1929. Less than one day's supply was available when the first rain in four months came on October 28. Dr. Noah



Map courtesy of the Northwest Arkansas Times

A map by Max A. Mehlburger, a consulting engineer from Little Rock, was reprinted by the Northwest Arkansas Times in 1948. It shows the four dams along the West Fork of the White River as well as the 18-year-old Lake Wilson.



Map by Charlie Alison

A present-day map based on Max A. Mehlburger's 1948 map shows the approximate location of the four dams along the West Fork of the White River as well as the 18-year-old Lake Wilson.



A recent photo of Dam No. 4, also known as Tilly Willy bridge, shows two

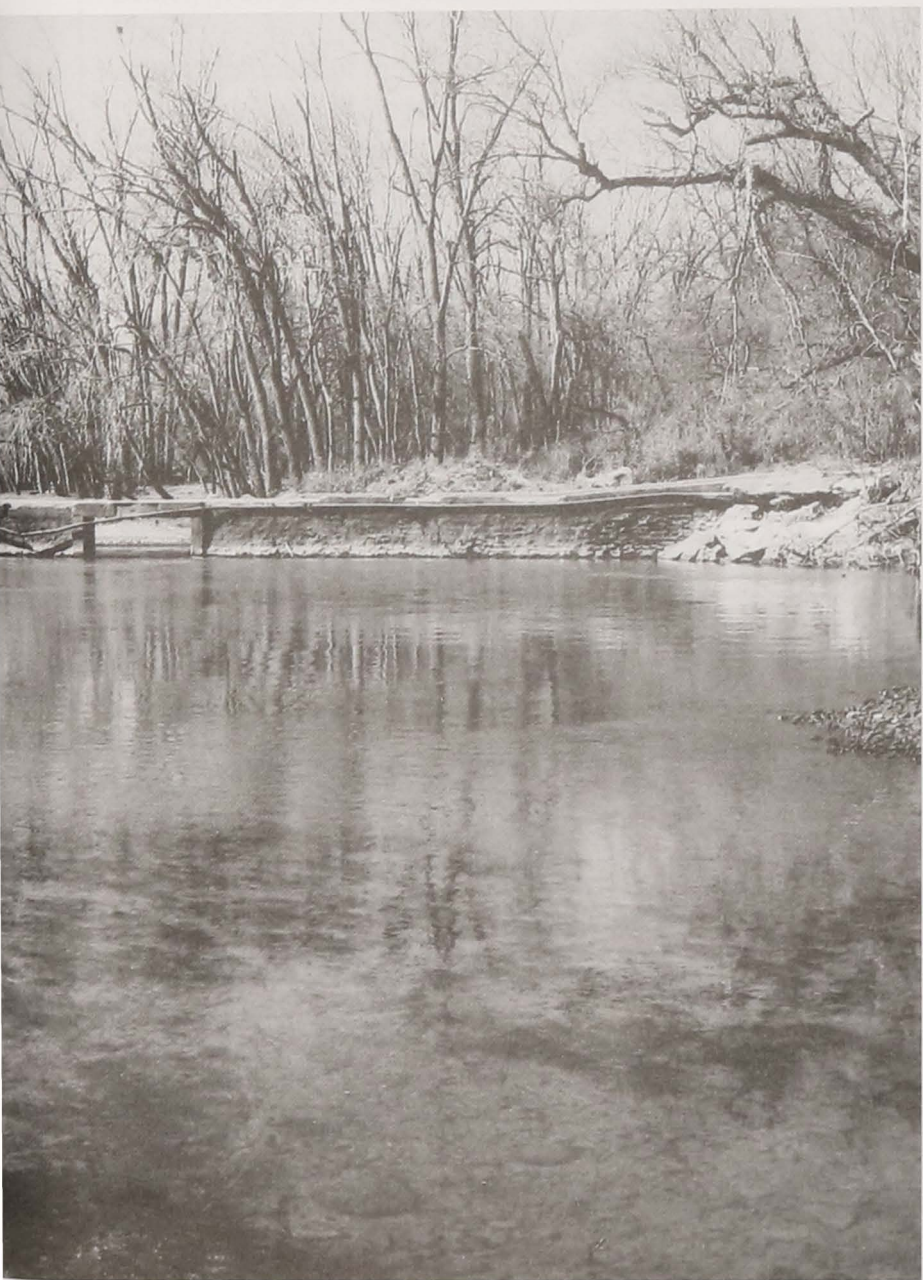


Photo by Steve Erwin

openings that were once gates for the dam.



Photo by Charlie Alison

In 2011, vehicles still used Dam No. 4, the Tilly Willy bridge, for crossing from the southeast side of the West Fork of the White River to the northeast side to connect with Fayetteville's City Lake Road.

F. Drake, geologist, was consulted and he reported:

That part of the Fayetteville shale in which the dam and lake would lie is a clay shale and would be almost impervious to water, would hold water well and would make an excellent location for the dam and lake.¹⁷

A total of 320 acres were purchased by the city.¹⁸ Construction started in May/June 1930 with C.E. Pierce in charge. The lake's earthen dam was completed by February 1931, was 50 feet high and 750 feet long and has a masonry core wall to prevent seepage and a concrete sluiceway. Cost was \$50,000.¹⁹ By February 1931, Lake Wilson was reported to be one-sixth full.²⁰ An intake well, allowing better control of water released from the dam, was constructed with Works Progress Administration labor in 1936. The lake was drained to the 12-foot level before construction commenced. Because of drought in the summer of 1936, the lake didn't completely fill, resulting in a water shortage.²¹ A pipeline was never constructed between Lake Wilson and the pump station. When water was needed from the lake, the intake well was opened to allow water to flow down Wilson Hollow to the West Fork of the White River through the opened Dams 3 and 2 and into the reservoir at the pump station.

The dual system of the West Fork and Clear Creek pump stations was an adequate water supply until the end of World War II. At that time Fayetteville's population increased significantly due in part to discharged servicemen attending the University of Arkansas under the recently passed GI Bill of Rights. The increased population put a strain on the water supply.

The only known map of the Fayetteville Water Supply showing the locations of the five dams on the West Fork was drawn in 1947 by Max A. Mehlburger, a consulting engineer from Little Rock, who was paid to redesign the water system.²² The map was drawn in support of an \$800,000 bond issue election to construct what has to become Lake Fayetteville, meant to replace the West Fork water system. The issue passed, and the dam was

completed in 1949 in piece-meal fashion. Cost overrides resulted in a reservoir that could store an adequate supply but could not deliver enough water through the distribution system to meet the needs of Fayetteville due to small pipelines. The West Fork system had to be kept on line and served as the primary source for Fayetteville's water.²³

A terrible drought occurred in 1952. The West Fork of the White River ran dry, water from Dam Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 was exhausted, and Lake Wilson had been drawn down to a two-week emergency fire-control supply. Lake Fayetteville was the only water source, but it could not keep up with demand despite pleas to conserve water use. As an emergency measure, crews dug channels in the river bottom upstream from the pump station on the West Fork, connecting pools together allowing one-half million gallons of water to flow into the reservoir at the Pump Station, where it was pumped to the reservoir on Mount Sequoyah. After this time, no further mention of West Fork Dams 2,3 and 4 have been found in news accounts. Perhaps Dams 2 and 3 were intentionally destroyed and the flood gates of Dam No. 4 were removed during the channeling of the river. Whenever mention is made of the West Fork system after 1952, it only includes the pump station and Lake Wilson.

Rains finally came and broke the drought on November 23, 1952.²⁴ The distribution problem with Lake Fayetteville and the reservoir on Mount Sequoyah was finally resolved when a larger pipeline went on line on August 1, 1953.²⁵ Although water distribution from Lake Fayetteville was improved, the West Fork was still used as a backup source as late as July 1966.²⁶

In June 1960, the newly constructed Lake Sequoyah was placed on line as the city's primary water supply. It had an adequate water supply and its distribution system was capable of supplying the city's water needs, making the West Fork system obsolete.

Today, some structures remain of Fayetteville's first water system. The rock Pump Station and the residence building are still at the Pump Station complex, but the pumps and other

equipment are gone. The doors and windows of the pump station have iron bars placed across them. Graffiti can be seen on the inside walls. At 103 years of age, Dam No. 1 at the Pump Station is still in place and provides a good fishing hole. Examination of the dam reveals where the extra three feet in height was added in 1923. Herman Jones and Leonard Kelly, residents living two miles upstream, report hearing the Fairbanks-Morse pump when Rex George, the pump station operator, placed it into operation in the evenings. The report it had two cylinders the size of 55 gallon drums.

Dams No. 2 and 3 cannot be seen on Google Earth, software than provides an aerial view of the world via the Internet, but fragments are probably visible in the river bed. Area residents Jones and Kelly report them being dynamited during the 1950s, possibly in 1952.

Dam No. 4 is still intact, minus its flood gates, and has been masquerading as the Tilly Willy Bridge for many years. The name



Photo by Charlie Alison

A city-owned house at the eastern end of Pump Station Road is boarded up and overgrown with ivy. Thirty yards east of it are the original pump station, Dam No. 1 and the West Fork of the White River.



The interior of the pump station no longer has its pipes and pumps but is

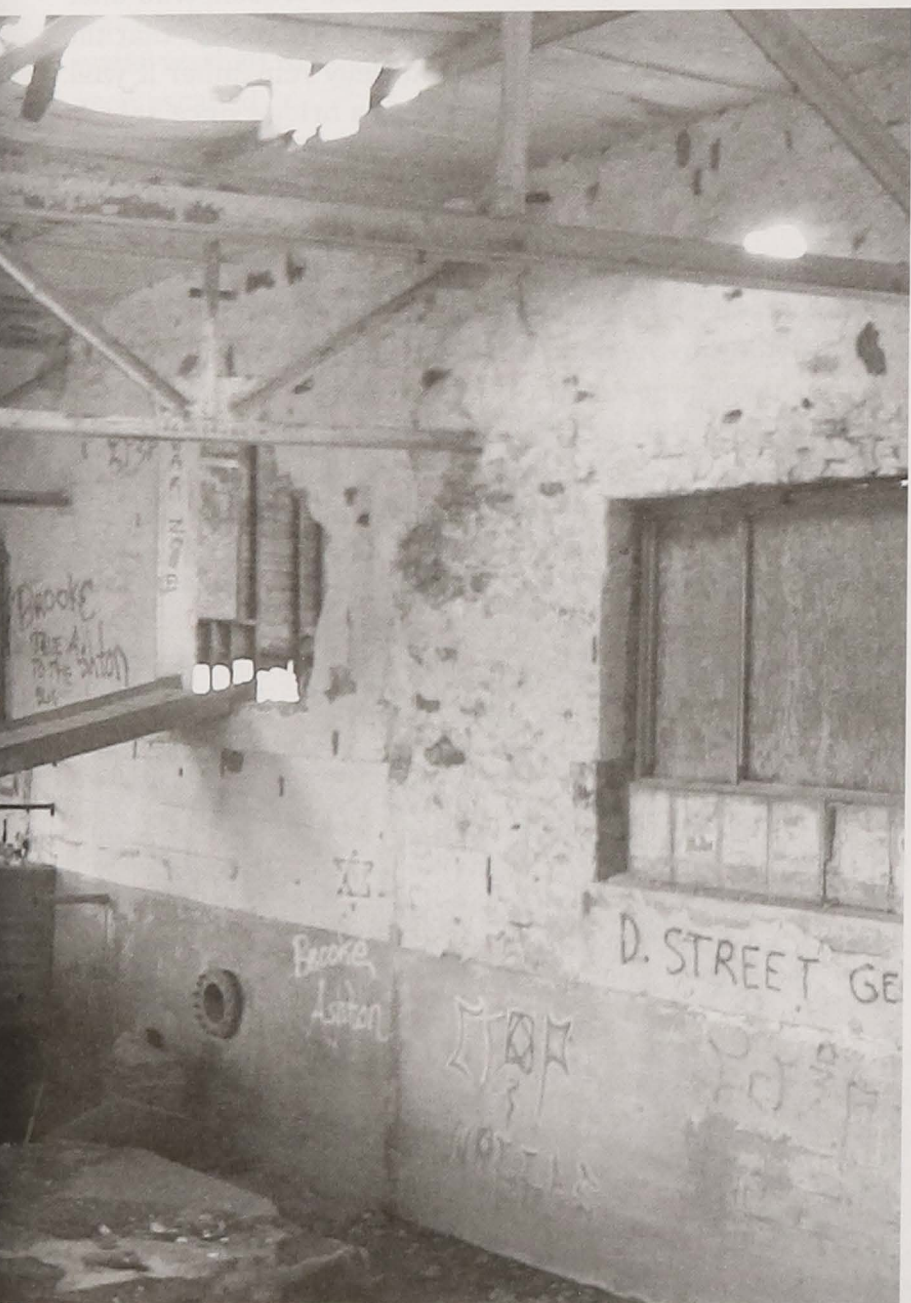


Photo by Charlie Alison

otherwise in relatively good condition, not counting graffiti.

Tilly Willy is thought to be short for Matilda Wilson, who once owned land in the area. Most folks today don't realize that the bridge was once a dam, but Jones and Kelly remember it well. Jones reports that the dam was in use as a bridge since at least March 1944 when he moved into the area with his parents William "Bill" Herman and Loretta Marshall Jones. At that time, two wooden flood gates covered the structure's two openings when used as a dam during late summer and early fall. He remembers that, at one time, city crews removed the gates and stored them temporarily beside the dam. An unexpected heavy rain washed them away during the night.

Jones reports one fatality happening at the bridge. A University of Arkansas student driving a new Chevrolet missed the bridge and plunged into the river, and was pinned inside his car. A female passenger escaped, but she could not free him. Kelly



Photo by Steve Erwin

Part of the structure popularly known as Tilly Willy bridge is engraved with the names of the engineer and construction company that built Dam No. 4 on the West Fork of the White River.

remembers that on another occasion, a man named Buchanan was hauling trash across the bridge in a Ford pickup when high water washed the truck from the bridge. Fortunately, Mr. Buchanan escaped.

Further evidence that Tilly Willy bridge is Dam No. 4 is provided by a hard-to-see inscription etched into a rectangle of smooth concrete on the downstream side of the structure and over the north channel. As first reported by Jason Minor of Fort Smith, Ark., on the On the Fringe website, a photo shows the inscription, which reads:²⁷

1928

E.M. Ratliff-Engineer

Lehman Bros. Const.

The names and date match up with contemporary newspaper accounts of Dam No. 4.

Much mystery surrounds Dam No. 4. When it was built it was made 10 feet wide, possibly to facility vehicle traffic for construction of Lake Wilson. Jones and Kelly remember it being used as a bridge even though the Wilson Hollow road is drawn on the 1947 map as fording the river downstream from Dam No. 4. Perhaps it has been unofficially left in place for use by local residents because it certainly is better than fording the river. It was used as a dam for at least 24 years and as a bridge for 82. City Engineer Emmett M. Ratliff would be proud to know his design has served so well.

Lake Wilson hasn't been used as a water source since about 1966. It is located on 320 acres that is designated as Lake Wilson City Park. Today, there is a pavilion for picnics, and the park has recently been designated as a dog park. Hiking trails are present and one is routed completely around the lake. Fishing is a popular activity, and a boat launching area is near the dam. Today, access to the park and Lake Wilson is by way of Tilly Willy bridge or by crossing to the east side of the West Fork south of Greenland on old U.S. Highway 71 and then taking the first road

left, County Road 69, down river to the park.

The water system on the West Fork of the White River served Fayetteville good-tasting soft water for many years. It was doomed as a permanent water supply due to an inadequate volume of water during drought years. There was never any mention of illness due to polluted water from the West Fork. Interested folks should visit relics of the West Fork water system while they are still intact. There is talk of removing Dam No. 4 and replacing it with a modern bridge. Since the dam was built by the city of Fayetteville, it might be appropriate if it was spared destruction and incorporated into the city's trail system.

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT: Grateful appreciation is extended to the staff of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale, Ark., for encouragement and assistance in the preparation of this work.

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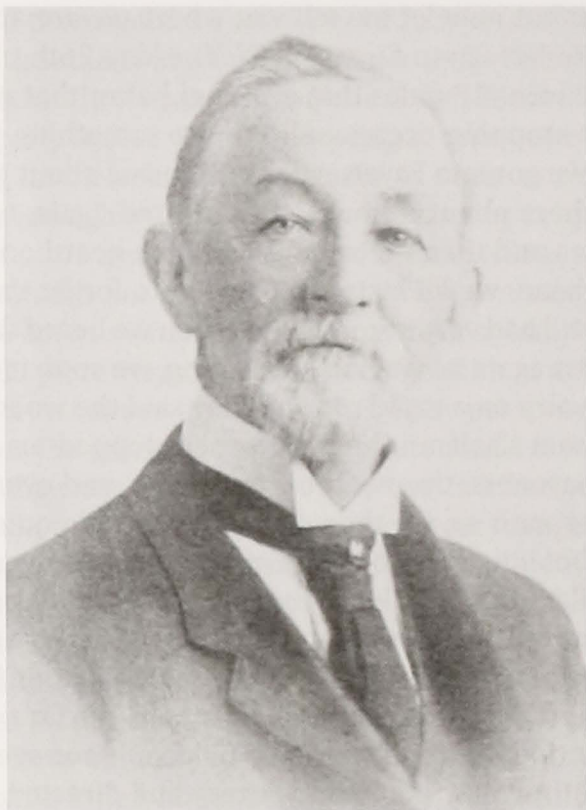
The Civil War Letters of Peter Houser

Peter Houser Jr. worked on his father's farm in McLean County, Illinois, until the age of 25, when he joined the 94th Illinois Volunteer Infantry in August 1862. He was a member of Company B, which served with the Union's Army of the Frontier and was attached to Gen. Francis J. Herron's division.

In late 1862, this division was sent from Springfield, Mo., in support of Gen.

James G. Blunt, whose troops were already in the region. Herron's troops came through Fayetteville and engaged Confederate forces at the Battle of Prairie Grove on Dec. 7, 1862, coincidentally Houser's 26th birthday.

Soon after the battle, Houser wrote three letters home. They were part of a dozen letters put up for sale



Peter Houser, circa 1900

separately on Ebay in 2009. The seller was kind enough to provide copies of them before they were split up. The punctuation in the letters was sparse and some has been added to help readability, but they are otherwise reproduced as written.

1862

Tuesday morning Dec. 9th

Dear Dock:

I write you on Sunday 23th ult. and promised then to write once a week, so last Sunday was my day to write again, but on that day I was engaged in sending messages to the rebels and had no time to write but now let me tell you where we are and how we got here: We left Camp Curtis on Wednesday 26th ult. at 2 o'clock p.m. and went 17 miles that evening[.] after that we went day and night stopping occasionally to get something to eat; Saturday night we got into Fayetteville (Arkansas) about 12 o'clock. Remained there about 4 hours, then started again, we went about five miles and then the canons could be heard only about three miles ahead, we all instantly seemed to forget that we were very tired and had very sore feet, for when we heard the canon we went as fast again as we had been going, we soon met the 1st Arkansas cavalry on a rapid retreat, they said the woods were full of rebels about a half mile ahead, we then stopped-loaded our guns, fixed bayonets, threw off our overcoats and every thing not need along with us, we then started on double quick to meet the enemy, but when we got half a mile ahead they were not there[.] our artillery then shelled the woods on both sides of the road, we then started again in pursuit but did not find them until we had gone about 2 miles[.] we then saw them about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile ahead Co. B. was deployed as skirmishers along with Co's. A & C, we advanced cautiously through an open field and soon seen that they meant fight for they planted a battery and directed it right at [unintelligible] we were then ordered to fall back, and did so, then the rebels raised a yell, we went back behind a little

hill and lay flat down, our artillery then sent them a shell, they replied immediately, and their shells burst right over us, our artillery fired about five times and then retreated into the woods (we had only two pieces then) we lay still and took a short nap but soon the artillery came back with [unintelligible] pieces and commenced on them; a few shots sent them away and we were up and after them, they retreated to the left and took a position on the hills, so we could not get at them without crossing an open field, we halted and were drawn up in line of battle about 2 o'clock p.m., from that hour till dark the firing never ceased. We were on the left flank and they tried several times to get around us but with not effect We poured volley after volley into them and they returning the compliment sometimes we drove them and then again we would have to retreat. Our regiment and the 26th Indians had to fight a thousand of them. The 26th was immediately on our right; one time the rebels were driving the 26th rapidly before them attempting to take our battery, we were laying down behind a fence and as soon as the 26th had passed far enough we opened on the advancing column which was then about 75 yards away — and it is needless to say that many of them did not get any further. While we were behind that fence the balls whistled around us as thick as hail. I went back over the field yesterday and saw where 6 balls had marked the rail which was just above my head. It is said by persons who might know that the battle of Sunday was the hardest that was ever fought in the west. Our reg. lost only two in killed and 40 wounded[.] I think the above is very nearly correct though may not be exactly so. Our Co has 12 wounded — (none killed) The only ones you know among the wounded are our second lieutenant W.W. Elder and Geo. Houser, our lieutenant is pretty badly wounded but I think George is not dangerously so; he is wounded in the shoulder — or at least I was told so. The rebel force was estimated at forty thousand; we had about fifteen thousand. The rebels lost in killed about six hundred[.] don't know how many were wounded, I saw 45 dead rebels lying in one pile yesterday. I must quit right here or I will not get this in today's mail.

P.S. I have just heard from George[.] he is slightly wounded in the neck; he walked from the battlefield back to Fayetteville, 10 miles, so you may know he is not dangerously hurt.

I will write again soon as I can. Write to me soon and direct your letter thus.

P. Houser Jr.
 Care Capt McFarland
 Co B 94th ILL
 Gen. Herron's Division
 Army of the Frontier.
 Via St Louis, Mo.

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In Camp ten miles S.W. of Fayetteville
 Arkansas Dec. 11th, 1862

Dear Dock:

I wrote to you on the 9th and told you what a stormy birthday I experienced last Sunday (7th inst) In the battle of that day Co B lost ten men out of 32 wounded in the reg. so you see our co. lost nearly one third of the whole number. I got two bullet holes through my pants; there were only two killed in our reg[.] The loss in killed and wounded of the rebels is estimated at 2,500. our loss in killed and wounded is thought to be some 575. [unintelligible] The enemies were 40,000 strong, We had 15,000. The 20th Wisconsin suffered terribly; the Col. of that reg was drunk and led his men into unnecessary danger: the 19th Iowa was terribly cut up too[.] I heard one man belonging to that reg say that they had about 75 men left that were fit for duty. The 94th lay on the battlefield all Sunday night. We fired a volley soon after dark — challenging the rebels to fight during the night, but we got no reply; next morning, when we were preparing to resume the fight the Rebel Gen. sent a flag of truce to our camp and acknowledged himself beaten, the rebels wer gone and we have not seen them since, but learned today that they are fifty miles from here. We doubtless had a very hard fight with them

and if it had not been for Gen Blunt's men coming in on the west we would have all been either killed or taken prisoners. I heard from George yesterday: he is getting along very well. Since we have been here the weather has been warm enough to be comfortable during the day without a coat on, but the nights a quite cool — cold enough to freeze some[.] I rec'd a letter from you yesterday[,] was pleased to learn that [unintelligible] and getting along with your work so well. Write soon and after to your brother, Peter

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Prairie Grove, Washington County, Ark. Dec. 24th 1862

Dear Dock:

I received a letter from Lind yesterday evening and found a note inclosed from you. I wrote to Lind only a few days ago and I will therefore write you a few lines this time. Lind says Billy Stewart wrote home that I had the mumps but was able to be to the table with my jaws tied up. Now all I have to say about this is, that Billy Stewart has lied, for I didn't have the mumps, it was only toothache, one of my jaws was swelled some but I didn't have them tied up at all. You have doubtless got all the particulars about the fight we had with the rebels before this time but may be you won't understand why Co.B. had so many more men wounded than any other company. I sent Lind a little map of the ground over which we fought and if you will look on that and see where we were when we were covering the retreat of the 26th Indians, you will know why we suffered so; we were not only closest to the rebels (Co. A. was skirmishing to our left) but we were also on higher ground than any other Co, and there it was that so many of Co. B. got wounded. We were compelled to retreat from that position for the rebels were coming regiment after regiment right at us and all the time making the bullets and buckshot whistle around us; the 94th was the only reg. on the field at that time — the others had become panic stricken

and were scattered all over creation but they rallied again and went in with a determination to win or die; about this time we were considerably cheered by the announcement tht Blunt was coming in on the right. we could then her his cannon and then such yelling and hurraing you never heard but still the rebels fought hard. it was almost one continual roar of at least a thousand muskets all the time and besides these there were some half dozen batteries throwing shell and shot all the time until darkness put an end to the strife. The 94th fired the first and last volley

While the battle was going on the smoke rose as thick and black as if a whole city was on fire. The next morning after the battle our Col or Lieut Col went under a flag of truce to the rebel officers on some pretense or other, but all he wanted was to find out their position; but while he was there Gen Hindman asked him what d—d regiment of regulars that was on the left — he was informed that it was the 94th ILL. The rebels were so badly whipped that during the night after the fight they took their blankets and straw and wrapped them round their wagon wheels so they could move away with as little noise as possible. Most of our wounded are doing very well — some will have to be discharged. George is getting along finely[.] Co. B. looks rather as an object of pity now, for it is often that we can go to drill or on dress parade with not more than 18 or 20 men!! Tomorrow is Christmas and Gen Hindman says he intends to bring his troops back then and serenade us, but we will never be in another fight if we remain here waiting for him. What is the Eastern news — I suppose though it is another “Grand review on the Potomac” or may be it is that Richmond is taken a musket and two camp kettles captured!! We heard here yesterday that Burnside has possession of Fredericksburg. Johnnie Birdsell is breaking out with measles today. the rest of the boys are well. Col Orme starts for home today. Write soon and give me all the news. Your Brother, Peter

Phi Alpha Theta

National History Honor Society, Founded at Arkansas, Turns 90

When Nels Andrew N. Cleven came to the University of Arkansas in 1919 as an assistant professor, he had little regard for the social activities of fraternities and sororities. At Arkansas, though, Cleven and his wife, Hilma, were frequently given the task of chaperoning social activities, and these outings apparently inspired Cleven to found an honor society for history students.

He later wrote that the concept of “diffusing information through socialized avenues was due to the kindly cooperation of my students in Arkansas.”

Seeing no national history fraternity, Cleven established the University Historical Society at Arkansas on St. Patrick’s Day in 1921, ninety years ago this spring. A painting in Cleven’s classroom depicted ancient Assyria and featured a six-pointed Star of Divinity. The star became the central symbol for Phi Alpha Theta.

A month later, the students adopted the name Phi Alpha Theta for the alpha chapter of what would grow into the dominant historical honors society for university students.

Today, the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society is an international organization with nearly 900 chapters around the world. Phi Alpha Theta’s mission is to “promote the study of history through the encouragement of research, good teaching, publication and the exchange of learning and ideas among historians.”

The organization holds a convention every two years to share historical research as well as methods for improving the teaching of history. The 2012 Convention will be January 3-7 at Orlando, Florida.

Fourth Annual Lemke Prize Competition Open for Submissions

The Washington County Historical Society announces the Fourth Annual W.J. Lemke Prize competition. Anyone interested in Washington County history, whether a professional or amateur historian, is encouraged to enter. Topics can be on any phase of Washington County's history or archeology, deal with an individual or institution connected with the county, and can address any time period.

The winning article will receive \$300; Second prize receives \$200. Both winners receive framed certificates. Winners will be recognized at the annual Ice Cream Social in August 2011.

Manuscripts will be judged on their contribution to the expansion of the county's history; the originality of the subject; and, the use of primary and secondary sources. The manuscripts must be original material, and not have been previously published; no more than 40 pages, typed, and double-spaced. Footnotes should be included on separate, double-spaced pages, although they do not count toward the 40-page limit. The title page should contain the heading "W.J. LEMKE PRIZE," the full title of the manuscript, the author's name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Entries become the property of the Washington County Historical Society and will not be returned to the author. All papers will be considered for publication in the *Flashback*. The Society reserves the right to award one or no prizes.

Copies of all entries in the Lemke Prize will be deposited with the Special Collections Department at the University of Arkansas Libraries. Entries may be mailed to Lemke Prize, Washington County Historical Society, 118 E. Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701, or e-mailed to charlie.alison@gmail.com by June 30, 2011. If the entries are e-mailed, they should be either in the PDF or Microsoft Word format.

For additional information on the W.J. Lemke Prize, please contact Charlie Alison at the above address, at 575-6731 or at charlie.alison@gmail.com.

PLANNED GIFTS

Making charitable gifts to the Washington County Historical Society will enable it to continue and expand its programs.

If you are making regular gifts to the Washington County Historical Society or would like to start, you may find it beneficial to set up or give:

1. A **charitable lead trust** that will pay income to WCHS for a set period.
2. A **charitable remainder trust** that will allow you to transfer property to a trust set up for WCHS without paying capital gains tax on the sale of the property.
3. **Appreciated securities** at their current value and take an income tax deduction for the year up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income.
4. **Gifts from your retirement account** that could be an integral part of planning for those withdrawals.
5. An **irrevocable life insurance trust** that could own your life insurance, when it no longer serves its purpose, to make a charitable gift that could reduce the estate's tax bill.

There are a number of ways to enhance your retirement plans while still providing for your charitable interests and making gifts you never dreamed possible. Consult with your financial adviser on other ways you can make charitable donations. These planned gifts will provide added tax benefits for you and your heir while helping to support the vital mission of the Washington County Historical Society for years to come.



Flashback

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